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### **Abstract**

Psychology is dominated by White Westerners. Subsequently researchers have minimized or ignored Black women's body dissatisfaction. This study sought to account for the intersection of racism and body dissatisfaction by coding the representation of Black women, the number of appearance adverts and articles across 8 issues of mainstream women's magazines (*Elle*, *Vogue*) and Black women's magazines (*Essence* and *Ebony*) from 2015/16. The majority of Black women featured in the magazines (N = 539) were young (83%) slim (62%), had light skin (66%) and straight hair (60%). Compared to the Black women's magazines, Black women were rarely represented in the mainstream women's magazines (N = 64, 11%) and when they were represented generally had straighter hair, narrow noses and lighter skin tones. This study underscores the need for psychology, including body dissatisfaction researchers, to recognize (and challenge) the intersections of racism with other impacts to wellbeing including body dissatisfaction.

## **Light except Lupita: The representation of Black women in magazines**

*“And it struck me that for black people, the pain of learning that we cannot control our images, how we see ourselves (if our vision is not decolonized), or how we are seen is so intense that it rends us. It rips and tears at the seams of our efforts to construct self and identity”* (hooks, 1992: pg. 3-4).

Body dissatisfaction, any shame or dislike of their appearance an individual has, is gendered in that women experience this more often and deeply than men. Much research has shown it is indeed now normative for women to have some body dissatisfaction (Bordo, 2003; Rodin, Silberstein, & Striegel-Moore, 1984). The impact of body dissatisfaction has most often been recognized clinically, through its link to depression, eating disorders, suicide and other serious health impacts (Bordo, 2003; Rumsey & Harcourt, 2012). It's impact also occur more frequently through the everyday, including a reluctance to participate in sports, sexual intimacy or in any situation that brings greater scrutiny to a woman's body (Bordo, 2003). Both the clinical, recognised impacts and the more everyday impacts make body dissatisfaction an urgent issue of injustice.

Despite the near universalism of women's body dissatisfaction, researchers often locate the causes of it as a problem for the individual. Whether through an imbalance in her hormones, faulty cognitions, or too frequent self-comparisons to others, individual level explanations are posited and individual level interventions are recommended (Cash, 2011a, 2011b; Suisman & Klump, 2011). Disturbingly researchers may even repudiate the influence of any causes beyond the individual that might explain why women, as a group of people, are directly affected by this. For example, the biggest meta-analysis of experimental research to date on the media's impact on body dissatisfaction has concluded: *“media effects are generally minimal and limited to those with pre-existing body dissatisfaction”* (Ferguson, 2013, p. 20). Etcoff (2002), goes further in repudiating any involvement at the fashion industry level through the blurb of her book: 'The Science of Beauty': *“[body dissatisfaction] is not a cultural construct that exists to tyrannize women...[and] line the pockets of fashion designers, but a universal fascination with the human form which developed along Darwinian lines since the dawn of man [sic]”*.

Feminists and others need to challenge body dissatisfaction researchers who emphasize that the individual is held responsible for her life, health and body dissatisfaction. Content analyses of media provide one method of doing so. Such content analyses quantify the prevalence of pressures placed upon women to conform to narrow appearance ideals and can help explain why women develop body dissatisfaction en masse disproportionately to men. Indeed content analyses are a compelling method of accounting for body dissatisfaction without repudiating the influence of any causes beyond the individual by analysing culture (i.e., media, see Jankowski, Slater, Tiggemann and Fawkner (2016) for further discussion of the advantages of the content analysis method). A review of this research follows.

## **Content analyses of women in the media**

Beginning in the 1970s with Kilbourne's *Killing Us Softly* (Kilbourne, 2010; Lazarus & Wunderlich, 1979); a systematic analysis of the sexualisation of women in popular American advertising, content analyses have been an important way to highlight limited representations of women. More recent content analyses have focused on not only sexualisation but also how images of women conform to narrow appearance ideals in mainstream women's magazines<sup>1</sup>. For example, Wasylikiw, Emms, Meuse and Poirier (2009) coded images of women in 10 popular issues of mainstream women's magazines for health/beauty (e.g., *Elle*, *Fitness* etc) published in June 2007. They found the majority were young (80%), White (91%), thin (95%) and had straight hair (82%). Other content analyses have found similar patterns. For example Jankowski et al. (2016) found that across popular UK dating and porn websites 87% of images of women conformed to the appearance ideal (e.g., were young, thin, White with large breasts etc). A similar high proportion has been found on other media including popular UK men's magazines (81%; Jankowski, Fawcner, Slater, & Tiggemann, 2014) and popular US magazines, adverts and celebrity websites (i.e., that 82% of images of women were young, 93% were facially attractive and 76% were thin; (Buote, Wilson, Strahan, Gazzola, & Papps, 2011; Jankowski et al., 2016).

### **The omission of these content analyses**

Such content analyses have usefully quantified the prevalence of appearance ideals in media. However these studies have also overlooked something. Specifically whilst the content analyses have purported to highlight the appearance pressures women face, implicit in this research is that all women are White. These content analyses have said little about the over representation of White women and under-representation of Black women (Jankowski et al., 2014, 2016; Wasylikiw et al., 2009). This has paved the way for researchers to pronounce that Black women are less susceptible to body dissatisfaction than White women because appearance pressures do not target them. Demonstrably, Powell and Kahn (1995) concluded in their study which explored differences in body dissatisfaction between White and Black women that Black women in the US were "*able to ignore the predominantly White media message that extreme thinness is essential for a happy successful life*" (p. 192) and that "*Black culture appears to 'protect' Black women from eating disorders*" (p. 194).

A further example is provided by Franko and Roehrig (2011) who provide the only chapter on Black ethnicity and body dissatisfaction in the popular body dissatisfaction encyclopaedia: *Body Image*. In the chapter the authors reiterate all the traditional research that concludes Black women develop body dissatisfaction to

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<sup>1</sup> Mainstream' magazines refer to those magazines targeted at women that are highest in circulation, make more profits and attract more revenue in the UK/US (such as *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan* etc.). Although these magazines do not explicitly state they target only White women the expensive products featured, the images represented and issues covered are all those that centre White women. However as this is not explicated and Black women's magazines do explicitly target and speak to Black women, these magazines are referred to as mainstream throughout.

a lesser extent than White women. Near the end of the chapter the authors refer to a survey on the reluctance of BME people to access support for body dissatisfaction (not referenced):

*“Ethnic minority individuals may still be less likely to seek help [about their body dissatisfaction] for reasons including: financial difficulties, lack of health insurance, not believing that others can help, fear of being labelled, lack of or unawareness of resources, feelings of shame and fear of discrimination”*  
(Franko and Roehrig (2011; 226).

Franko, Roehrig and the authors of the studies they reference, all make a glaring omission. The content analyses fail to theorize why it is that the majority of the images of women in popular media are White. Powell and Kahn (1995) do acknowledge a White biased media but argue that it leaves Black women better off, even protected from body dissatisfaction. Franko and Roehrig (2011) go so far as to ask why Black people do not seek support for body dissatisfaction but do not listen to the answers Black people give them. The glaring omission is the absent presence of racism. The appearance ideals in media are White, because racism and appearance ideals intersect so that Whiteness is the standard of beauty. A media that is biased towards white people does not serve a protective function against body dissatisfaction for black women but instead reproduces racism by virtue of bodily exclusion (Hill, 2016; hooks, 1992). It fails to value or speak to black women Black people do not access support for body dissatisfaction not because they do not require that support but because of all of the barriers created by racism: *“lack of health insurance, not believing that others can help, fear of being labelled, lack of or unawareness of resources, feelings of shame and fear of discrimination”* (Franko & Roehrig, 2011; pg. 226).

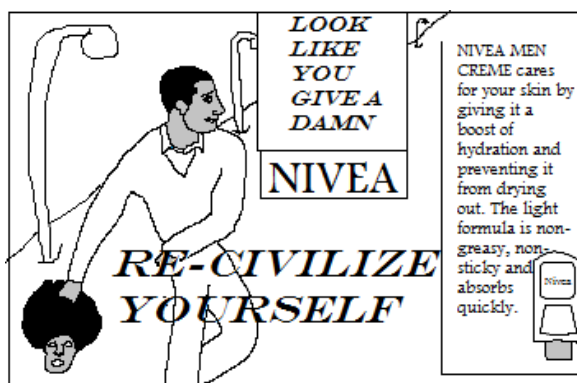


Image 1: 2011 Nivea advert

The omission of racism should be surprising in body dissatisfaction research given how explicit media racism often is. For example, content analyses of popular media representations of appearance have failed to look at media seriously without noting the advertisements such as this one by cosmetic giant Nivea (see Image 1) that directly links being “uncivilized” with afro hair (Afro-Europe, 2013; Nudd, 2011). Similarly researchers like Powell and Kahn (1995) most likely would have found body

dissatisfaction among Black people if they had considered intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1991). For example, Powell and Kahn could have asked Black people about colourism, the practice of valuing light skin over darker skin since colonialism and slavery. This is an obvious example of the intersection of racism with appearance pressures (hooks, 1992). Intersectionality theory outlines how oppressions indelibly overlap and cannot be undone separately (Crenshaw, 1991). For example, Black women will be likely to face not only classism, racism and sexism but a combination of all three oppressions (as well as others such as ableism) that are greater than the sum of its parts (Crenshaw, 1991). By omitting racism from their analyses, researchers have missed the ways in which racism and appearance pressures intersect including through colourism, afro hair devaluation, to the promotion of only those Black models who have Western features: narrow noses and lips and thinner, leaner body types. Collectively, this research has left Black women's body dissatisfaction either unaccounted for or minimized by researchers.

### **Content analyses of Black women's magazines**

Fortunately there are some exceptions to the omissions of race in body dissatisfaction research. Such research has specifically analysed images of Black women in popular media. Baker (2005), for instance, coded approximately 150 images of sexualized women featured in adverts in 2002 issues of the popular Black women's (*Essence* and *Honey*) magazines. Unsurprisingly, the Black women's magazine adverts featured more Black than white women (67% vs 27% White women). Despite this, the majority of the images of the women in these magazine adverts still had lighter skin (81%) and straighter hair (69%). The majority were also thin or curvy (74% i.e., not higher weight or muscular). Similarly, Hazell and Clarke (2007) coded images of Black women in 18 issues of popular US Black women's magazines (*Essence* and *Jet*) published in 2003 and 2004. Although they did not report the exact proportions, they also found the majority of Black women had lighter skin, straighter hair, average sized noses and lips and average or thin body types. Finally, Smith (2015) coded 138 images of Black women featured in adverts in 5 issues of *Ebony* magazine. Each issue was published once per decade between 1964 and 2014. She found that the majority of Black women again had lighter skin (85%) and straight hair (61%). Collectively these studies have found that of all images of Black women featured across popular Black media, there are few that have dark skin, afro hair, wider noses or lips, and higher weight.

Interestingly Baker (2005) also analysed images of women in mainstream women's magazines (*Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan*). The author found that there were more images of thin and lighter skinned women in the mainstream magazines. However the author did not parse the results between images of Black women and White women. Thus it was unclear whether the mainstream magazines featured more images of thin and lighter skinned women because they featured more images of White women overall or because they featured more images of lighter skinned and thin Black women.

These studies have also broadened their analysis of media beyond images of Black women. Such studies have acknowledged that other content is important in explaining Black women's body dissatisfaction. Specifically, in addition to coding images of Black women, Hazell and Clarke (2007) also coded adverts that focused on "health and body issues" (pg. 10) in the US magazines *Essence* and *Jet*. They found that the adverts commonly featured some racist subtext whether through the product advertised, the text featured or both. Frequently this was to lighten skin or relax afro hair. Similarly Thompson-Brenner, Boisseau and Paul (2011) analysed *Ebony* magazine issues from 1969-2008. They found that around a quarter of articles featured were about weight or body shape control. Finally Kean, Prvidera, Howard and Gate (2014) qualitatively analysed 106 articles featured in issues of *Essence* and *Ebony* magazines published between 2008 and 2009. Interestingly, they found that whilst there was a focus on appearance in many of the articles, that physical health, nutrition, exercise, spirituality and community were also a focus of the content.

As noted in previous content analyses (Jankowski et al., 2016), media targeted at a marginalized group, that is not mainstream, often incorporates an unusual goal into its remit. Specifically, to highlight and challenge the oppression(s) that group faces. For example, *Ebony* states in its most recent media kit it "*not only represents the absolute best of Black America...but the brand also takes a stand for our people. EBONY consistently protects and defends our readers by highlighting the community's most crucial issues....*" (Ebony Media Corporation, 2017, p. 3). Notably, gay male media often features many editorials and campaigns for LGBT rights (Jankowski et al., 2016). This was not a goal shared by the general audience magazines *Men's Health* and *FHM*. In addition these latter magazines would feature fewer adverts partially because of companies' reluctance to target their product to a specific group (as opposed to a broader, mainstream market in general audience magazines). Therefore mainstream women's magazines might be more likely to feature appearance adverts and appearance articles than Black women's magazines given these magazines have not been 'burdened' with the remit of Black liberation nor with the reluctance of advertisers to limit their readership.

### **The current study**

Content analyses are an important way in accounting for women's body dissatisfaction that does not blame individual women for this but rather begins to locate the problem as culturally driven (e.g., through media images, see also Jankowski et al., 2016). Like much of body dissatisfaction and psychological research, these content analyses have failed to account for media racism in their analyses leaving Black women's body dissatisfaction either unaccounted for or, more frequently, minimized. Content analyses that have looked at images of Black women or on Black women's magazines provide a counter story to this, highlighting how the appearance ideal is not only thin and young but also (de)racialised in that it is featured with lighter skin, straighter hair, a narrow nose and lips. Such intersectional analyses begin to document the specific oppressions Black women face whether

racism or another oppression (e.g., ableism). The current study aimed to systematically code images of Black women, adverts and articles featured in popular Black women's and mainstream women's magazines in order to begin to quantify the appearance pressures Black women face and therefore better understand their body dissatisfaction.

We hypothesize that in comparison to the Black women's magazines that the mainstream women's websites will feature more:

- 1) Images of Black women that are appearance-ideal, nude, sexualized and not disabled
- 2) Appearance adverts
- 3) Appearance articles

## Method

### Source selection

Two magazines 'types' were selected for analysis. The first were popular magazines that target Black women, *Essence* and *Ebony*. The second type were popular magazines that did not target a subgroup of women per se but nonetheless featured content specific to White women, namely *Vogue* and *Elle*. All four of these magazines publish the same amount of monthly issues per year (12), were readily available for analysis and have similar distribution remits. *Ebony* and *Essence* distribute the magazines internationally including the US and UK. *Vogue* and *Elle* also market internationally but have somewhat different content tailored for each host country they distribute in. Therefore the British editions of *Vogue* and *Elle* were selected for analysis whereas *Ebony* and *Essence* magazines that were distributed in the UK were selected (these issues were identical to the US editions). Each magazine includes content that focuses on fashion, beauty and lifestyle issues of women though the Black women's magazines have a more political, liberatory focus.

As of August 2016, Press Gazette, the UK's journalism reviewer, estimated the total annual circulation of *Vogue* as 195,093 and *Elle* as 171,874 issues (Mayhew, 2016). Press Gazette does not record the circulations of *Essence* and *Ebony* nor do each magazine's respective media kits list their UK specific distribution. Nonetheless their global distribution is listed which for *Essence* is 7,588,000 and *Ebony* is 1,250,000 though it should be noted that this distribution is likely to be smaller in the UK and certainly smaller than the British editions of *Vogue* or *Elle* (Ebony Media Corporation, 2017; Essence Communications, 2016). One issue from each of the four magazines from 2015 and 2016 were obtained for coding. A full list of the issues is available in Table 1.

Table 1. *List of magazines issues coded*

Black women's magazines

Mainstream women's  
magazines



Period	<i>Ebony</i>	<i>Essence</i>	<i>Vogue</i>	<i>Elle</i>
2016	July 2016	January 2016	January 2016	January 2016
2015	September 2015	October 2015	July 2015	August 2015

### Procedure: Coding

Every image larger than 4.25cm<sup>2</sup> of an adult Black woman (i.e., appeared to be 18+ years) featured on any of the pages was coded. Only images over 4.25cm<sup>2</sup> were coded as their physical attributes were more readily visible. Women whose visible ethnicity was not White or Asian (as would appear to the coder and therefore likely the reader of the magazine) were coded. Black was defined politically, according to the 'one drop rule'. This refers to the way in which any person whose ancestry was Black and whose skin was not White were considered, by White society, Black even if they had majority White heritage (Media Diversified, n.d.). This included light skinned Black women, mixed heritage Black women and darker skinned Black women. White and Asian women were not coded as this would not allow the coding of appearance and objectification pressures that Black women specifically face.

Codes were adopted from previous empirical findings (Baker, 2005; Jankowski et al., 2014, 2016) as well as through pilot testing of the codes on a sample of the material. There were six codes for the physical appearance attributes of images of women. These codes included:

- 1) Age: (1a) Unknown (1b) Young (18-40 years, no obvious wrinkles, skin sagging or grey hair), (1c) Mid-life (40-60, few obvious wrinkles, skin sagging or grey hair) and (1d) Older (60+, wrinkles, skin sagging or grey hair);
- 2) Body type: (3a) Unknown, (3b) Thin or athletic (ectomorph, narrow hips) , (3c) Average or curvy (average size of women, some curves but not higher weight) (3d) Higher weight (endomorph body shape, visible fat on body)
- 3) Skin type (with lower types indicating lighter skin according to Fitzpatrick Scale; Fitzpatrick, 1988): (1) Type 1, (2) Type 2, (3) Type 3, (4) Type 4, (5) Type 5, (6) Type 6,
- 4) Nose size: (1) Unknown (nose obscured) (2) Narrow, (3) Average size (4) Wide
- 5) Hair type: (with lower types indicating straighter hair as defined by widely used but unnamed Hair Type rating scale see (Naturally Curly, n.d.): (5a) Unknown (hair type obscured: woman is wearing a hat, has hair closely cropped, hair is in braids etc.), (5b) Type 1 (Straight hair, no curl pattern), (5c) Type 2a, (5d) Type 2b, (5e) Type 2c, (5f) Type 3a, (5g) Type 3b, (5h) Type 3c, (5i) Type 4a, (5j) Type 4b, (5k) Type 4c

Further, these images were coded for degree of nudity, dismemberment and disability. The specific codes follow:

- 6) Nudity: (6a) Unknown (body obscured), (6b) Fully clothed, (6c) Some nudity (model in swimwear or underwear only, shirt unbuttoned, topless or fully naked).
- 7) Dismemberment, where part or all of the woman's body is featured without their face visible: (9a) None and (9b) Dismembered.
- 8) Disability: (8a) None (no visible indicator of disability), (8b) Disabled (indication of physical disability including mobility or hearing aid, prosthetic limb, amputated limb, facial or visible difference e.g., cleft palate and lip).

The codes and levels are presented in Tables 3 and 4. Ethical approval was granted from the first author's institutional ethics review board.

## Results

Table 2. *Average number of women by ethnicity represented in the magazines*

	Black women's magazines		Mainstream women's magazines		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ethnicity: Black	116	91	18	7	134	35
Ethnicity: White	11	9	237	92	248	64
Ethnicity: Asian	1	1	0	0	1	0
Total	128	100	257	100	385	100

As seen in Table 2, the Black women's magazines featured the majority of Black women (91%). The mainstream women's magazines featured the majority of White women (92%). This is representative of the British population according to the latest census data (Office for National Statistics, 2012b). Where in the UK 87% are white, 7% are Asian and 6% are Black/Mixed or Other.

### The appearance potency of the magazines

In total 539 images of Black women, 390 full-page adverts and 226 articles were coded. Across all magazines, the majority of Black women were young (83%), thin or fit/ athletic (62%), had lighter skin types (i.e., 1, 2, 3 or 4; 66%), had a narrow or average-sized nose (63%) and had straighter hair (i.e., types 1, 2a, 2b 2c; 60%). Few were nude (6%), dismembered (2%) or had a physical disability (<1%). Of the 390 adverts featured, 283 (73%) were for appearance products and of the 226 articles featured, 118 (52%) were about appearance. A full breakdown of the frequencies and percentages of the levels at which Black women were coded are presented in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

### Differences between Black and mainstream women's magazines

In order to test the prediction that mainstream women's magazines would feature more images of Black women that were appearance-ideal, nude, sexualised and not disabled as well as more appearance adverts and appearance articles than

Black women's magazines, a series of Pearson Chi Squares was conducted on all variables except Disability (given there was only 1 instance of an image coded as such). In order to meet the expected frequency assumption of Chi square analysis (Pallant, 2010), levels within some variables were collapsed (e.g., the levels Skin Types 1 and 2 were collapsed to one single level: Skin Types 1 and 2 for the code: Skin Type). *Cramer's V* statistic, a chi-square effect size, is also presented (with .10= small, .30 = medium and .50 = large, (Pallant, 2010).

The Chi-square analyses showed a significant difference between the magazine types on Age ( $\chi^2 (3) = 8.10, p = .044, \text{Cramer's } V = .12$ ) Body Type ( $\chi^2 (3) = 22.73, p = .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .21$ ), Hair Type ( $\chi^2 (10) = 31.72, p < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .25$ ), Skin Type ( $\chi^2 (5) = 161.01, p < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .25$ ) Nose Size ( $\chi^2 (3) = 37.75, p = .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .27$ ), Nudity ( $\chi^2 (2) = 10.66, p = .005, \text{Cramer's } V = .27$ ) and Dismemberment ( $\chi^2 (3) = 5.14, p = .046, \text{Cramer's } V = .10$ ). More specifically, analyses of the standardised residuals revealed there were more images of Black women that were average/curvy or higher weight and that had Skin Types 4 and 5 in the (Black) women's magazines. In contrast, there were more images of Black women with Skin Type 6, with average sized noses, with hair types 3b, 4b and 4c and that were dismembered in the mainstream women's magazines. There were no differences in the remaining levels of the codes or on the Nudity code whatsoever.

For the adverts and articles, the Chi Square analyses showed there were more appearance adverts in the mainstream women's magazines (87%) than in the Black women's magazines (44%;  $\chi^2 (1) = 80.64, p < .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .46$ ). This was also true for appearance articles where the mainstream magazines featured more (65%) than in the Black women's magazines (30%;  $\chi^2 (1) = 25.67, p = .000, \text{Cramer's } V = .34$ ). A full breakdown of the frequencies and percentages of the levels at which the adverts and articles were coded are presented in Table 6.

## Discussion

Across both magazine types, appearance ideal images of women were prevalent (i.e., who were young, thin or athletic). This concurs with previous content analyses (Jankowski et al., 2014, 2016; Wasylkiw et al., 2009). Appearance ideal images represent an unrealistic appearance standard for the majority of the population. For example, despite an ageing global population, where 49% of the UK population is over 40 years of age, only 17% of the images of women were over 40 (Office for National Statistics, 2012a).

Importantly, this content analysis also accounted for the racialised aspects of the appearance ideal, an omission in previous analyses (Jankowski et al., 2014, 2016; Wasylkiw et al., 2009). Traditionally, body dissatisfaction researchers have noted that appearance ideal images represent an unrealistic standard for the majority of women without attending to how these standards are even more unrealistic for Black women. Specifically images of Black women are not only likely to conform to the appearance ideal but they are also more likely to be featured with lighter skin, straighter hair and narrower noses than darker skin, natural or curly hair and wider noses. This concurs with the findings of previous media content analyses of Black women's magazines (Baker, 2005; Hazell & Clarke, 2007; Thompson-Brenner et al., 2011). Black women then do not only face appearance pressures to be slim and youthful but also to lighten their skin, to narrow their noses and to relax their hair.

The magazine types differed in their representation of Black women. Firstly and most notably the majority of the images of Black women (87%) were featured in Black women's magazines. It bears emphasizing then that few Black women are featured in mainstream women's magazines generally. Secondly and partially in support of our hypothesis, the Black women's magazines featured more images that were diverse in appearance compared to the mainstream women's magazines. For example, more images of Black women with heavier body shapes and with darker skin were featured in the Black women's magazines. There was, however, a notable exception to this finding. Specifically there were more images of Black women who had the darkest skin shade (Type 6) and with afro hair types in the mainstream magazines than the Black women's. This finding was unexpected and contradicted our hypothesis. Closer analysis of the images analysed revealed that the mainstream magazines did not feature proportionally more images of darker skinned and afro haired Black women, they featured more token and time-sensitive images of one, single, darker skinned, afro haired Black woman – the US-based actress Lupita Nyong'o. Demonstrably of the 72 images of Black women in the mainstream women's magazines, 18 (25%) of these were of Nyong'o. It is likely then that the unusual media and commercial attention on Nyong'o, a Black women with skin type 6 and hair type 4c, has skewed the findings indicating the mainstream women's magazines feature more images of diverse Black women. It speaks to how few images of Black women there were in general across the mainstream women's magazines that a single Black women, Lupita Nyong'o, would skew the analysis.

Why is Nyong'o featured so often in the mainstream women's magazines? Doubtless because of her talent and perhaps too also because of a small

breakthrough in the thinking of advertisers and the magazine editors in their representation of at least one dark skinned, natural haired Black woman. But more cynically (on the editors and advertiser's parts), shortly after her Oscar win in 2013 Nyong'o was announced the face of *Lancome*, a French subsidiary of cosmetic giant *L'Oreal*, the third biggest marketer (BBC News, 2014; Hall, 2016). Both *L'Oreal* and *Lancome* place many adverts in *Elle* and *Vogue* and therefore influence the editorial content that both magazines produce. It is highly likely that Nyong'o's featured so heavily across these magazines (including the front cover interview with Nyong'o in the January 2016 issue of *Elle*) less because of a breakthrough in racialized appearance pressures but rather because of Lancome's profit imperative.

Others have suggested that Black women are often exoticised with natural hair, tribal outfits and diverse body types in mainstream media precisely because they are so rarely featured (hooks, 1992). Thus they are treated as a novelty. In contrast the Black women's magazines feature many Black women, often celebrities and community leaders, who may be more likely to be light-skinned, narrow nosed and relaxed hair. This would reflect the wider racist society that actual, living Black women have to contend with and the appearance ideal Black women must conform to.

Certainly it would be naïve to conclude that mainstream women's magazines are more likely to feature diverse images of Black women than Black women's magazines or that there is no problem with the representation of Black women in mainstream magazines. This is particularly important given the higher circulations, advertising revenue and finances of the mainstream women's magazines compared to the Black women's. As well as the important remit that the Black women's magazines are fulfilling (to promote Black women, to highlight Black civic issues) that mainstream women's magazines ignore. In support, as found in this study the mainstream women's magazines feature the majority of adverts, appearance related or otherwise (66%) and are also bigger magazines more generally with the *Vogue* and *Elle* issues having more pages ( $M = 210.04$ ,  $SD = 16.08$ ) against *Ebony* and *Essence* ( $M = 117.50$ ,  $SD = 14.27$ ). Put more simply with less resources and little money the Black women's magazines represent Black women better and speak up on Black issues to a much greater extent than the mainstream magazines.

So why are Black women's magazines not representing Black women in all of their diversity? A brilliant analysis of *Essence* after its 2005 acquisition by the White-owned media conglomerate Time Warner can help reveal why (Hill, 2016). Hill found after the acquisition the magazine significantly increased its content focused on fashion, heterosex and consumerism whilst decreasing its content focused on anti-racism, feminism and classism (in line with the magazines original Black civic mission statement). Hill argued this was direct evidence that the transformative nature of publications like *Essence* will be reduced when a) the need to make profits take over other goals and b) when White people take ownership. This is further demonstrated by Shevelle Rhule, the Fashion and Beauty Editor of a Black women's magazine, *Pride* who was asked to comment about the rarity of afro hair in Black women's magazines (Intelligence Squared, 2014):

*"I think the biggest frustration [for our magazine Pride] definitely comes down to revenue. Unfortunately you know natural hair it's not a huge, it's not a huge money making revenue. Erm what makes money? Weaves. What makes money? Relaxers. And it's trying to find that balance. Obviously we want to cater to every sort, every hair type, you know I've got pages of the magazine that cater just for natural hair, I've got pages that cater for chemically straightened hair. Erm and obviously in terms of editorial content you have to find that balance obviously in [gaining enough] advertorial revenue and that's probably the biggest frustration. And it's also a frustration for us because we would love to see a greater representation of natural hair in the magazine".*

As Rhule indicates Black women's magazines cannot afford to represent Black women in all of their diversity. *Pride*, like many magazines are businesses and must make a profit. They are also beholden to their advertising revenue. So Rhule had to be careful to not offend the weave and relaxer businesses that do advertise in *Pride* and keep *Pride* magazine operating. Unlike other more popular and profitable magazines such as *Vogue* and *Elle*, magazines like *Pride*, *Essence* and *Ebony* are advocating for Black women whilst managing the need to make a profit. Singling out these or any other media title as individually culpable for causing body dissatisfaction fails to see how capitalism underpins body dissatisfaction (see also Jankowski, 2016).

As with all studies, this one had its limitations. Appearance pressures intersect with oppressions other than racism. Notably there was only one instance of a person who visibly was disabled in any of the magazines. These oppressions themselves intersect so that Black women face sexism, racism and specific appearance pressures that White women and men do not. This content analysis began to account for the intersection of racism with appearance pressures, but it did not account for the ways in which appearance pressures are gendered or more fully racialised (e.g., through the use of tribal prints and fashions for Black models or to the ways in which Black women are sexualized in a way that is different to the sexualisation of White women; hooks, 1992; Kilbourne, 2010). Relatedly, the analysis in this study was somewhat surface level. The meanings behind the images of the women, adverts or articles were not analysed. Qualitative and intersectional content analyses are needed in future e.g., ones that expand on analyses of Black women represented as matriarchs, as Sapphires, and as Jezebels (hooks, 1992).

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## Appendices

Table 3: *Frequencies of images of Black women for the Age, Body type and Skin type codes.*

Code	Level	Magazine genre						Total	
		<i>Black women's magazines</i>			<i>Mainstream magazines</i>			N	%
		N	%	Z score	N	%	Z score		
Age	Unknown	12	2.6	-0.7	5	6.9	1.8	17	3.2
	18-40	371	79.4	-0.1	60	83.3	0.3	431	80.0
	40-60	68	14.6	0.5	6	8.3	-1.2	74	13.7
	60+	16	3.4	0.6	0	0.0	-1.5	16	3.0
Body type	Unknown	<b>35</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>2.0</b>	46	8.5
	Thin or athletic	254	54.4	-0.7	53	73.6	1.9		
	Average or curvy	<b>114</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	122	22.7
	Higher weight	<b>63</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-2.9</b>	63	11.7
Skin type	Skin Types 1 and 2	7	1.5	-0.6	3	4.2	1.4	10	1.9
	Skin Type 3	39	8.4	-0.1	7	9.7	0.3	46	8.5
	Skin Type 4	<b>278</b>	<b>59.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>-2.6</b>	302	56.0
	Skin Type 5	<b>132</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>-2.7</b>	139	25.8
	Skin Type 6	<b>7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>-4.3</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>11</b>	36	6.7
Total		467	86.6		72	13.4		539	100.0

**Note.** Bolded text indicates significant differences between magazine genres across images coded at that level. Also percentages may be different to those presented in text as percentages are calculated including the proportion of images coded as 'Unknown'.

Table 4: Frequencies of images of Black women for the Nose size and Hair type codes.

Code	Level	Magazine genre						Total	
		<i>Black magazines</i>		<i>women's</i>	<i>Mainstream magazines</i>				
		N	%	Z score	N	%	Z score	N	%
Nose size	Unknown	21	4.5	-1.8	15	20.8	4.6	36	6.7
	Narrow	58	12.4	0.7	3	4.2	-1.8	61	11.3
	Average	<b>236</b>	<b>50.5</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	258	47.9
	Wide	153	32.8	-0.6	32	44.4	1.5	185	34.3
Hair type	1	102	21.8	0.2	13	18.1	-0.6	115	21.3
	2A	79	16.9	0.2	10	13.9	-0.5	89	16.5
	2B	37	7.9	0.2	4	5.6	-0.6	41	7.6
	2C	20	4.3	0.4	1	1.4	-1.1	21	3.9
	3A	28	6.0	0.6	1	1.4	-1.5	29	5.4
	3B	<b>34</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	34	6.3
	3C	42	9.0	0.1	6	8.3	-0.2	48	8.9
	4A	16	3.4	-0.3	4	5.6	0.8	20	3.7
	4B	<b>7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	13	2.4
	4C	<b>21</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	30	5.6
	Unknown	68	17.1	-0.4	13	25.0	1.2	81	18
Total		467	86.6		72	13.4		539	100.0

**Note.** Bolded text indicates significant differences between magazine genres across images coded at that level. Also percentages may be different to those presented in text as percentages are calculated including the proportion of images coded as 'Unknown'.

Table 5: *Frequencies of images of Black women for the Nudity, Dismemberment and Disability codes.*

Code	Level	Magazine genre						Total	
		<i>Black women's magazines</i>			<i>Mainstream magazines</i>			N	%
		N	%	Z score	N	%	Z score		
Nudity	Unknown	<b>12</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>1.3</b>	19	3.5
	Fully clothed	42	91.9	0.2	6	86.	-0.4	49	91.1
	Some nudity (collapsed)	9			2	1		1	
		27	5.5		2	4.2		29	5.4
Dismemberment	None	<b>46</b>	<b>98.5</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>93.</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	52	97.8
		<b>0</b>			<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>		7	
Disability	Some	<b>7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>	11	2.0
	None	46	100.	0.0	7	98.	-0.1	53	99.8
		7	0		1	6		8	
	Aid or physical impairment?	0	0.0	-0.9	1	1.4	2.4	1	0.2
Total		46	86.6		7	13.		53	100.
		7			2	4		9	0

**Note.** Bolded text indicates significant differences between magazine genres across images coded at that level. Also percentages may be different to those presented in text as percentages are calculated including the proportion of images coded as 'Unknown'.

Table 6. *Frequencies of appearance adverts and appearances articles featured.*

Type of advert/article	Magazine genre		<i>women's</i> Z score	<i>Mainstream</i> magazines		Z score	Total	
	<i>Black</i> magazines <i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%		<i>N</i>	%
Appearance products	<b>60</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>-3.8</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>	285	73.1
Other adverts	<b>73</b>	<b>54.9</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>-4.5</b>	105	26.9
Total	133	100.0		257	100.0		390	100.0
Appearance	<b>25</b>	<b>30.1</b>	<b>-2.8</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>	118	52.2
Other articles	<b>58</b>	<b>69.9</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>-2.2</b>	108	47.8
Total	83	100.0		143	100.0		226	100.0

**Note.** Bolded text indicates significant differences between magazine genres across images coded at that level. Also percentages may be different to those presented in text as percentages are calculated including the proportion of images coded as 'Unknown'.